

Message Text

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PAGE 01 JIDDA 04770 280702Z
ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
-----061856 290751Z /13

R 280510Z JUN 78
FM AMEMBASSY JIDDA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2509
INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY SANA

C O N F I D E N T I A L JIDDA 4770

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PEPR, SA, YE, YS
SUBJECT: BRIEFING SAG ON TWINAM MISSION

REF: (A)STATE 162882 (B) JIDDA 4704

1. AMBASSADOR WEST AND TWINAM, ALONG WITH POL OFFICER
JESSE LEWIS, MET WITH SAG DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER THUNAYYAN
AND SAUDI MFA DIRECTOR OF PENINSULA AFFAIRS SHURA THIS
MORNING JUNE 27 AMD MADE POINTS REF A.

2. THUNAYYAN WELCOMED THE TWINAM MISSION AND CALLED
IT A "GOOD STEP THAT WILL BE SEEN AS SUPPORT" OR NORTH
YEMEN'S SECURITY AND INTEGRATY. HE SAID THAT SAUDI
ARABIA HOPED THAT THE TWINAM MISSION WOULD BE SUCCESSFUL.

3. BOTHAMBASSADOR WEST AND TWINAM EMPHASIZED THAT TWINAM
MISSION TO SANA AND THE PRESIDENTAIL MESSAGE THAT HE WAS
CARRYING WERE PARTY IN RESPONSE TO POINTS MADE BY
PRINCE TURKI IN MEETING JUNE 25 (REF B).

4. AMBASSADOR ASKED THUNAYYAN WHAT NEWS HE HAD HEARD
FROM SOUTH YEMEN. THUNAYYAN REPLIED THE SITUATION WAS
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NOT TOO CLEAR, THAT THE OUTBREAK OF FIGHTING DEFINITELY
REPRESENTED A STRUGGLE BETWEEN SALIM RUBAY71
ALI AND ABDUL-FATTAH ISMAIL. HE SAID THAT THERE WERE
STILL REPORTS OF GUNFIRE IN ADEN LATE MONDAY NIGHT.

5. THUNAYYAN SAID THAT ONE POSSIILITY IS THAT RUBAY'I
ALI WAS BEING MADE THE SCAPEGOAT FOR GHASHMI'S MURDER BUT

THAT THERE IS NO RPT NO LCEAR EVIDENCE THAT CONFIRMS THIS. RUBAY'I ALI'S REPUTATION WAS NOT ONE OF INNOCENCE, HE SAID.

6. THUNAYYAN ALSO SAID THAT HE DOUBTED THAT THERE WOULD BE A CONFRONTATION IMMEDIATELY WITH NORTH YEMEN UNTIL THE SITUATION HAD SETTLED DOWN IN ADEN. HE REPORTED THAT THE PDRY DEFENSE MINISTER WAS IN MOSCOW AT THE TIME OF GHASHMI'S MURDER AND THAT HE RETURNED IMMEDIATELY TO ADEN. THUNAYYAN SAID THAT SAUDI ARABIA LEARNED OF A STRUGGLE BETWEEN THE FORCES OF RUBAY'I ALI, WHOM HE DESCRIBED AS RELATIVELY MODERATE AS COMPARED TO THE "PURE MARXIST" ABDUL-FATTAH ISMAIL. THUNAYYAN RECALLED THAT RUBAY'I ALI MADE A VISIT TO SAUDI ARABIA LAST SUMMER, DURING WHICH TALKS WERE HELD THAT SUGGESTED MODDRATION IN SOUTH YEMEN'S POLICIES. HOWEVER, WHEN RUBAY'I ALI RETURNED TO PDRY NOTHING HAPPENED. THYNAYYAN SIAD THAT EVEN THIS CAUTIOUS SHIFT IN PDDRY'S POLICY WAS RESISTED BY THE HARDLINERS.

7. TURNING TO THE SITUATION IN NORTH YEMEN, HE SIAD THAT SHOCK OF GHASHMI'S MURDER APPEARED TO HAVE CREATED UNITY IN FACING COMMON THREAT AND THAT THE SITUATION WAS STABLE. HE SAID THAT IT WAS A "HEALTHY SIGN" THAT THE GOVERNMENT IN SANA COULD MAKE SUCH A SMOOTH AND QUICK TRANSITION. WEST
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